Nick Torrance

From:

Kent < Kent@AerialPhotographers.us>

Sent:

Sunday, April 18, 2021 6:42 PM

To:

Nick Torrance

Subject:

Ord 1700, Cond 15 Comment

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links, open attachments, or reply unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Contact the IT Helpdesk if you need assistance.

Hello Nick,

Here a comment to pass along.

Thanks,

April 2, 2021

Nicholas Torrance Sussex County – Planning & Zoning 2 The Circle P.O. Box 417 Georgetown DE, 19947 nicholas.torrance@sussexcountyde.gov

Mr. Torrance,

The Amerities Committee within Grande at Canal Pointe (GCP) consists of 15 homeowners that meet 10 times per year to provide a forum for community ideas and input focused on continued improvement of our commen areas. Our collective Committee would like to express our support for the request to amend Ordinance 1700 to remove condition #15 – "No piers, docks, boat ramps, or other water related recreational facilities shall be permitted". We believe that the documentation provided to your team with this request represents a clear majority of our homeowners wants and needs for the continued improvement of our community.

Thank you for assisting our neighborhood in this matter.

Sincerel	٧.
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Jeff Topley, Committee Chairman 37369 Oxford Court Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971 Rick Dressel 41332 Gloucester Dr. Mike Searson 19549 Manchester Dr.

John Zingo, Board Liaison 19465 Bridgewater Kent Larson, Board Lialson 37448 Liverpool Lane Ellen Roney Hughes 41349 Gloucester Dr.

Judy McClafferty 41226 Gloucester Dr. Irene Paonessa 41361 Gloucester Dr. Catherine Perge 37541Worcester Dr.

Doug Hawkland 37484 Liverpool Lane

Kathy Pizzadelli 19480 Manchester Dr. Christopher Shipp 37452 Liverpool Lane

Robin Bedlington 41373 Gloucester Dr. John Robinson 29564 Manchester Dr. Lenny Stump! 41263 Gloucester Dr.



April 20, 2021

VIA EMAIL

Planning & Zoning Department
Attn: Planning & Zoning Commission
2 The Circle
PO Box 417
Georgetown, DE 19947
jamie.whitehouse@sussexcountyde.gov
annlepore@sussexcountyde.gov
chase.phillips@sussexcountyde.gov

RE: Opposition to C/Z 1926 CP Townhomes, LLC (Canal Point RPC)
Our File No.: 18388-003

Dear Commissioners:

We represent Bob Reed, Martin and Eileen Clark, Connie Malmberg, Mike Stakias, Joseph Coates, Payam Hariri, Barry Rosenthal, Sally Fogarty, and Jan O'Malley all residents of Henlopen Acres (collectively the "Property Owners"). These Property Owners oppose C/Z 1926 to remove one of the conditions of approval of C/Z 1538 and Ordinance 1700 which prohibits piers, docks, boat ramps and other water related recreational facilities in this development.

Ordinance 1700 (the "Ordinance") amended the Comprehensive Zoning Map of Sussex County from a MR Medium Residential District to a MR-RPC Medium Density Residential District-Residential Planned Community. On May 25, 2004, the County Council voted to approve C/Z 1538 subject to twenty (20) Conditions finding consistency with the Comprehensive Development Plan and promotion of the "health, safety, morals, convenience, order prosperity and welfare of the present and future inhabitants of Sussex County."

The County Council found that the change of zone was appropriate legislative action based on a number of reasons, confirming that the twenty (20) conditions imposed as part of the change of zone served to "minimize any potential impacts of the surrounding area." The proposed amendment to Ordinance 1700 contemplates removal of Condition No. 15 ("Condition 15") which states "No piers, docks, boat ramps, or other water related recreational facilities shall be permitted." When the County Council passed Ordinance 1700, they confirmed that "The applicant established by substantial evidence that the proposed use would not have an adverse

¹ See Exhibit A detailing the Property Owner Names and Addresses.

impact on the character of the neighborhood, property values, traffic or the environment." If granted, this amendment to remove Condition 15 will permit many adverse impacts on the surrounding area environmentally, aesthetically, and would create considerable safety and noise concerns. Now that the entire Canal Pointe community is developed, this original condition has even more significance and must be enforced not removed.

The Property Owners are also specifically opposed to the installation of any dock and especially a dock designed similar or identical to the dock proposed in 2017. The 2017 design was defined as a "Kayak/Canoe Launch" but appeared to be much more than that, consisting of a 8' x 6' ramp, 18' x 6' fixed walkway/pier, 12' x 3' gangway, 10' x 6' floating pier, and 8' x 30' floating dock.

The designated area for the proposed dock and recreational area is located between two environmentally sensitive areas consisting of land in the flood zone and/or Federal and State protected wetlands. In fact, except for the small area where the applicant now wants to set up the dock and recreational area, the entire eastern border of the subdivision consists of Federal or State protected wetlands. If any dock or recreational area is permitted, the installation of the dock will further damage an environmentally sensitive area of wetlands that has already been damaged by residents of this development by launching kayaks and paddle boards into the canal. The developer and now the HOA have not prohibited the very use which the HOA now wishes to permit. The HOA wants to now allow all families who have community access to this adjacent area to have the right to a semi-public community launch site for numerous water related recreational activities. If Condition 15 is removed, it will be an invitation for all manner of activities at the canal front and the eventual destruction of wildlife (a family of Eagles that nest within 100 yards of the area), aquatic habitat, and flora and fauna in and near the canal and the wetlands adjacent thereto.

No residents of the community can claim that they were not aware of and bound by this restriction. They could not have any reasonable expectation that access to the canal would be permitted. The typical resident may have assumed that recreational activities in the canal were permissible in this area because the developer and the HOA constructed a non-permeable Concrete Walkway that ends near but not in the environmentally sensitive area proposed for dock installation. In the Applicant's submission, it suggests Canal Park and the Concrete Walkway abut a marsh area. The Applicant included a Plan View of the Proposed Project drafted and prepared by Precision Marine Construction Inc. on June 6, 2017 that states that the distance to the end of the Concrete Walkway to the Canal is at least 56 feet. In the original recorded site plan, the area east of the end of the existing walkway was identified as wetlands.

Further, in the reasons supporting the approval of Ordinance 1700, the County Council found that the projects would be served by amenities located *on site*, *which include*, *but are not limited to*, *a swimming pool and walking trails*. This proposed dock is an offsite, geographically distant amenity inconsistent with the amenities plan for the community and exceeds the scope of what County Council considered appropriate legislative action for the approved change of zone.

² See Exhibit B including Plot Book 88, Page 163, 165, and 171 of the Canal Point Residential Planned Community Record Plan.

In addition to concerns about environmental impacts, the Applicant's submission referenced a five-space parking area for vehicles over 400 feet to the proposed designated dock area. The Property Owners are reasonably concerned that permanent or semi-permanent structures will begin to appear within a year to support kayak and paddle storage because there is no parking closer than 400 feet away from the proposed communal dock and recreation site. This will not only be aesthetically unappealing but will also cause further damage to the environment if structures are built in this environmentally sensitive area.

The residents of this development have other options for recreational water activities including the option to launch their kayaks, canoes, and paddle boards at the numerous other public water access locations in Rehoboth, Dewey, and Lewes. The Rehoboth Lewes Canal does not have the width or traffic capacity to have a kayak or paddle board party area in this location while also dealing with substantial motorized boat traffic that traverses the area, especially in the summer months. Permitting the removal of Condition 15 could also set a precedent for other owners in this community with possible minimal water access to the canal to seek to install other communal docks and recreational areas along the canal.

It is true that some of the objectors have docks on the other side of the canal. However, private, existing docks are different from the communal dock and recreational area proposed by the Applicant. Specifically, no private dock owner would allow hundreds of people to come through their property, drag or trundle kayaks and paddle boards or canoes over their private property to spend a day rowing and swimming around the canal. Removing the express condition as requested would allow just that. For public safety and the reasons stated above this is a terrible idea, is expressly counter to the above quoted reasons for adopting the original ordinance and the County should not permit it now.

Thank you for your consideration of the Property Owner's opposition to this application. They respectfully request that the Commission recommend denial of the request to remove Condition 15 from Ordinance 1700.

Very truly yours,

BAIRD MANDALAS BROCKSTEDT LLC

/s/ Stephen W. Spence
Stephen W. Spence, Esquire (#2033)
sws@bmbde.com
/s/ Mackenzie M. Peet
Mackenzie Peet, Esquire (#6692)
mackenzie@bmbde.com
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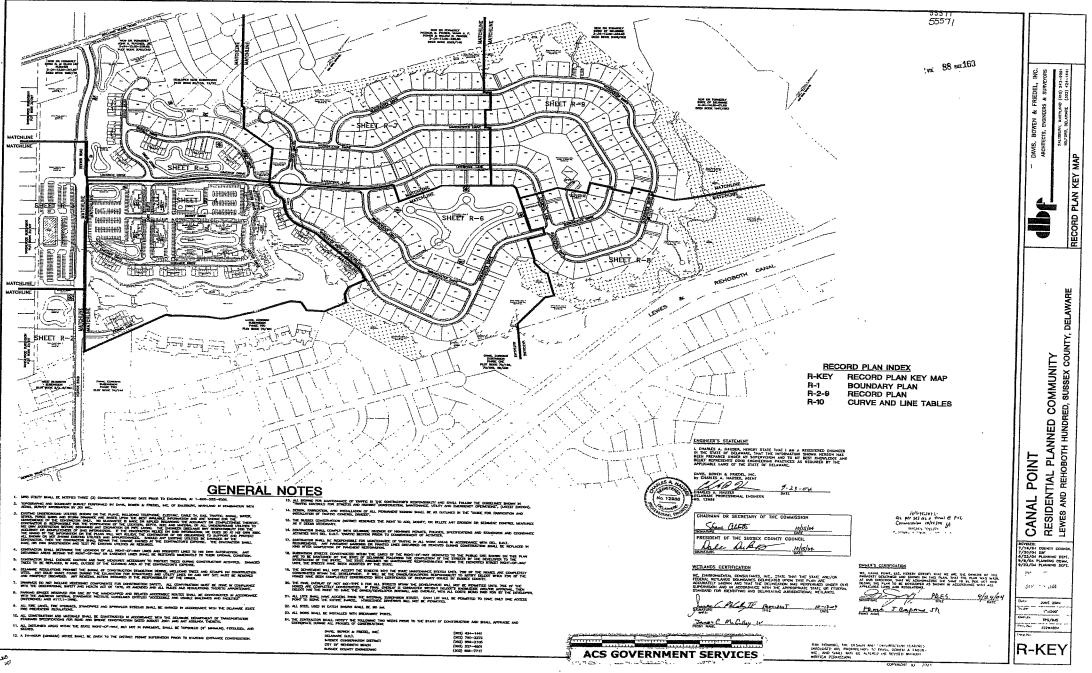
EXHIBIT A Property Owner Names and Addresses

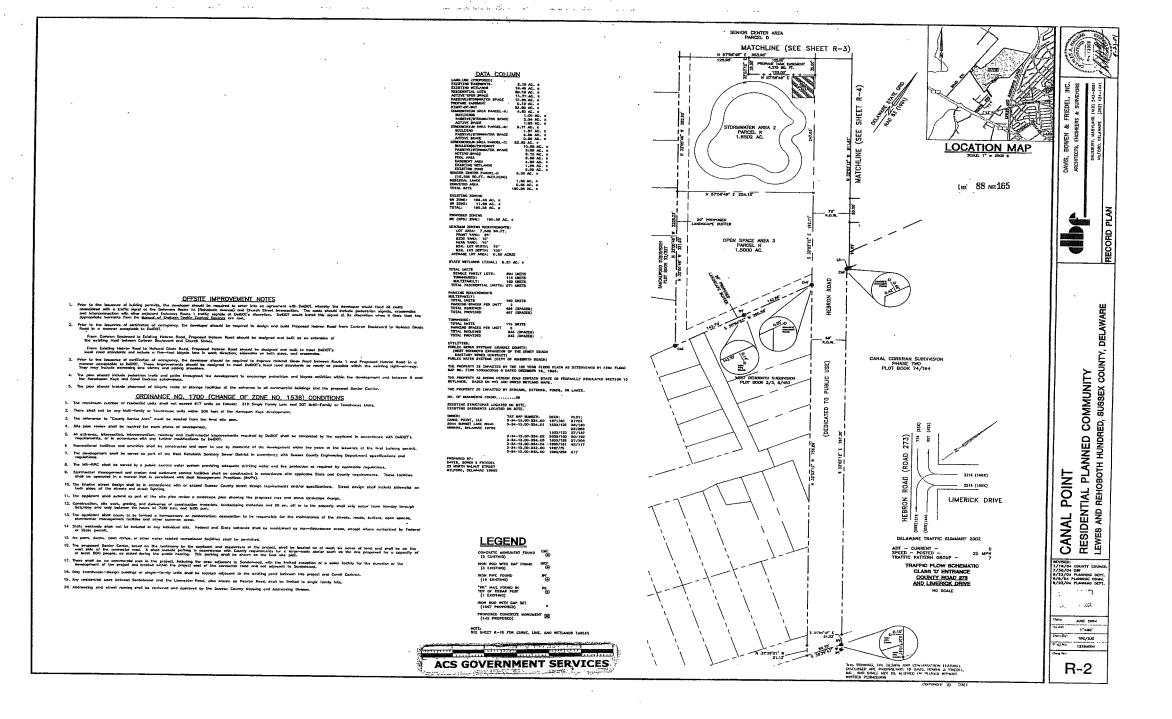
Property Owner Name and Address List

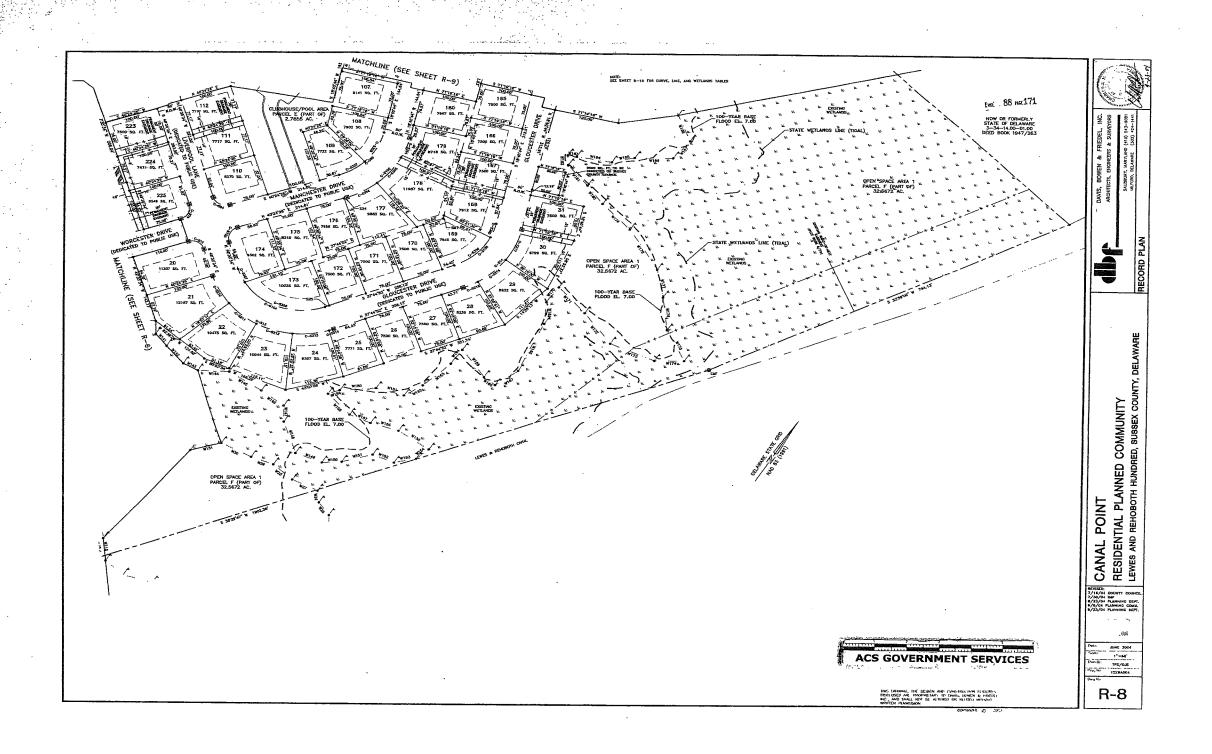
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Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971



EXHIBIT B Record Plan







Town of Henlopen Acres

104 Tidewaters Henlopen Acres, Delaware 19971

> Phone: 302-227-6411 Fax: 302-227-3978

April 21, 2021

VIA EMAIL TO:

Jamie.whitehouse@sussexcountyde.gov

Annlepore@sussexcountyde.gov Chase.phillips@sussexcountyde.gov

Sussex County Planning & Zoning Commission 2 The Circle P.O. Box 417 Georgetown, DE 19947

RE: Case No. C/Z 1926 - Zoning Amendment for Canal Pointe

To Whom It May Concern:

I serve as Mayor of the Town of Henlopen Acres, an incorporated municipality of 200 homes on 156 acres that borders the Lewes & Rehoboth Canal. Our community greatly values the protection of environmentally sensitive areas and the preservation of a tranquil environment for our residents.

The Town was not served with the Notice of Public Hearing scheduled to occur tomorrow, April 22, 2021 in the above-referenced matter and was only alerted to it by one of the affected residents. Since that time, we have endeavored to fully understand the request and to ensure that all our owners in the immediate vicinity were aware of the public hearing, which many were not.

The Commissioners of Henlopen Acres convened a special meeting on April 21, 2021 and voted to oppose the pending request for a Zoning Amendment by CP Townhomes LLC and the Canal Pointe Maintenance Corporation to remove Condition 15 from Ordinance 1700. The removal of Condition 15 would permit the Canal Pointe community to pursue a dock project that will impact our Town and will most significantly affect our residents along Tidewaters Road who are located across from the proposed dock site. We understand the proposed dock will be used by a minimum of 283 single-family homeowners and possibly up to 600 total homeowners if access is subsequently extended to the town house and condominium owners at Canal Pointe.

We respectfully wish to make the following statements to the Planning & Zoning Commission on the proposed Amendment request:

1. Original Rationale for Condition 15

As a threshold matter, we believe that the Planning & Zoning Commission should determine and make public the reason(s) the County included Condition 15 when the development was originally approved by the County in 2004. If the County ultimately decides to endorse and approve construction of this community dock through the removal of Condition 15, it should explain why that rationale no longer applies. We note that this fundamental issue was not addressed by the Applicant or in the Staff Analysis memo from the County Planning Office that was included in the packet of information for the hearing. If the rationale includes the protection of the environmentally sensitive area at issue, we note that the City of Rehoboth Beach is on the verge of opening a new public canal dock and kayak launch site that is very nearby and could be utilized by Canal Pointe residents. Use of the Rehoboth Beach dock will ensure that the environmentally sensitive area at issue here remains undisturbed.

2. Protection of Wetlands under Condition 14

We understand that during the subdivision approval process in 2004, the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) observed that "the project represents a major loss of forested wetlands" and urged that "buffers of 100" or more from waterbodies and wetlands should be employed throughout the site for water quality and habitat benefits." (Source: Letter from Office of State Planning to Project Manager dated January 10, 2004).

Our residents report seeing large swaths of trees and plantings abutting the wetlands being cut to establish the Park in which the dock is proposed to be built, and we believe the Planning Commission should ensure that all required buffers, whether by the State or County, are being respected to ensure protection of vital natural resources. It is noteworthy that Condition 14 of Ordinance 1700 provides that "Federal and State wetlands shall be maintained as non-disturbance areas, except where authorized by Federal or State permit." The observations of our residents call into question whether Canal Pointe is currently in compliance with Condition 14. We believe removal of Condition 15 will almost certainly result in a lack of compliance with Condition 14.

3. Narrow Relief

While the Town's position is that Condition 15 should remain in its entirety, if this proposal is ultimately approved by the Commission and County Council, we believe that Condition 15 should not be eliminated in its entirety but rather a narrow exception should be added that authorizes a small dock suitable for launching kayaks but otherwise leaves Condition 15 in place to preclude other water-related recreational facilities from being built at Canal Pointe. We believe that if any relief is granted (and we do not think it should be) such narrow relief is the only option to preserve and protect the sensitive wetlands area that surrounds the proposed dock site and the valuable wildlife habitat in the area which includes an eagle nesting area.

Page 3 Letter to Planning & Zoning Commission

4. Impact on Neighbors

Further, if approved, we request that Canal Pointe establish operational restrictions, including hours of operation and permitted activities, to minimize the impact of noise on adjacent neighbors in the Acres. Because of the proximity of the Park that is located only 140 feet across the Canal, our residents are already being impacted by the gatherings of Canal Pointe residents a short distance away. This will be magnified many times more if the dock is permitted.

5. Owners' Correspondence

While the Town Commissioners have independent reasons to oppose the removal of Condition 15, as expressed in this correspondence, we acknowledge the correspondence provided to the Commission on behalf of several homeowners in the Acres by the Baird Mandalas Brockstedt firm, dated April 20, 2021. We share the concerns of the homeowners raised in that correspondence.

On behalf of the Commissioners and residents, thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Joni Reich, Mayor